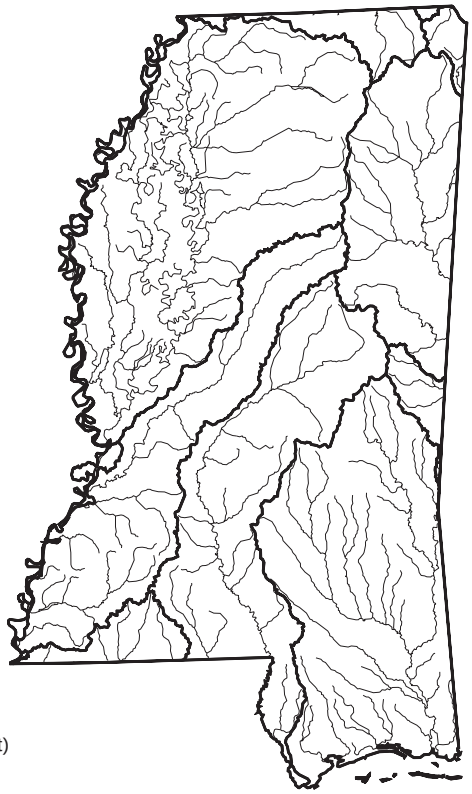
Mississippi



Basin Boundaries
(USGS 6-Digit Hydrologic Unit)

For a copy of the Mississippi 1996 305(b) report, contact:

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Surface Water Quality

Mississippi reported that 94% of its surveyed rivers have fair water quality that periodically does not support aquatic life uses and another 1% have poor water quality that does not support aquatic life uses. About 91% of the surveyed rivers do not fully support swimming. The most common pollutants identified in Mississippi's rivers include nutrients, pesticides, suspended solids, and bacteria. Agriculture is the most common source of pollution in rivers, followed by municipal sewage treatment plants.

About 95% of the surveyed lake acres have good water quality that fully supports aquatic life uses and 99% of the surveyed lake acres fully support swimming. Nutrients, metals, siltation, pesticides, and oxygen-depleting substances are the most common pollutants in Mississippi lakes. Agriculture is also the dominant source of pollution in Mississippi's lakes.

In estuaries, over 88% of the surveyed waters have good quality that fully supports aquatic life uses, and shellfishing activities are impaired in 60% of the surveyed estuarine waters. Organic enrichment, turbidity, and bacteria cause most of the impacts observed in estuaries. High bacteria levels are associated with shellfish harvesting restrictions. The State attributes impacts in estuarine waters to urban runoff/storm sewers, septic systems, and land disposal activities.

The State has posted six fish consumption advisories and three commercial fishing bans due to elevated concentrations of PCBs, PCP, dioxins, and mercury detected in fish tissues.

Ground Water Quality

Extensive contamination of drinking water aquifers and public water supplies remains uncommon in Mississippi although localized ground water contamination has been detected at various facilities across the State. The most frequently identified sources of contamination are leaky underground storage tanks and faulty septic systems. Brine contamination is also a problem near oil fields. Little data exist for domestic wells that are seldom sampled. Ground water protection programs include the Pesticide Container Recycling Program, the Underground Storage Tank Program, the Underground Injection Control Program, the Agrichemical Ground Water Monitoring Program,

and the Wellhead Protection Program (approved by EPA in 1993).

Programs to Restore Water Quality

During 1993 and 1994, Mississippi developed regulations for conducting Section 401 Water Quality Certifications. The regulations enable the State to review Federal licenses and permits for compliance with State water quality standards. The comprehensive regulations went through public review and were adopted in February 1994. Mississippi also expanded its definition of waters of the State to include wetlands and ground waters.

Programs to Assess Water Quality

Each year, the State samples about 25 of their 57 historical fixed monitoring stations on a rotating schedule. The State monitors physical and chemical parameters bimonthly, metals in the water column twice a year, and biological parameters once a year. The development and implementation of a rapid bioassessment methodology has significantly increased coverage of State waters beyond the historic fixed stations. Several stations are also sampled annually for metals and pesticides in fish tissues. The State monitoring program is supplemented by a network of 27 stations operated by the USGS.

Individual Use Support in Mississippi

Designated Use[a]		Percent				
		Good (Fully Supporting)	Good (Threatened)	Fair (Partially Supporting)	Poor (Not Supporting)	Poor (Not Attainable)
Rivers and Streams (Total Miles = 84,003)[b]						
	Total Miles Surveyed					
	39,064	2	2	94	1	-
	1,001	27	57	14	3	-
	431	9	<1	50	41	-
Lakes (Total Acres = 500,000)						
	Total Acres Surveyed					
	286,326	77	18	5	0	-
	265,390	85	4	11	0	-
	205,409	99	0	1	0	-
Estuaries (Total Square Miles = 760)						
	Total Square Miles Surveyed					
	202	10	78	11	0	-
	53	40	60	0	0	-
	43	35	5	60	0	-
	328	67	29	5	0	-

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.

– Not reported in a quantifiable format or unknown.

[a] A subset of Mississippi's designated uses appear in this figure. Refer to the State's 305(b) report for a full description of the State's uses.

[b] Includes nonperennial streams that dry up and do not flow all year.